

Answer to 61-5417/a

Approved For Release 2003/05/05 : CIA-RDP80B01676R000700200015-9

13 JUL 1961

Honorable Joseph E. Karth
House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Karth:

In response to your 30 June inquiry concerning statements made by [] in his 26 June letter to you, please be advised that [] has been involved in rather extensive correspondence with this Agency and with the Air Force since early 1958 on the matter of UFO's.

[] believes that the Central Intelligence Agency is withholding information from him which would prove that this Agency is, to quote his letter to you "... solely responsible for creating the Flying Saucer furor. . . ." He believes further that this information is contained in the Scientific Advisory Panel Report on UFO's, dated 17 January 1958, (Secret). []

[] was supplied with the declassified and "Official" version of this report, but this apparently has only served to convince that what is being withheld is information which would prove his claim. This is in spite of the fact that he was informed* as long ago as 20 May 1958 that "The complete formal report of the panel has not been fully declassified for security reasons. The Formal Report is not available to the general public for distribution or reproduction," and "For your information, the classified portion of the Formal Report and the unofficial supplement did not deal specifically with UFO's but on other matters of intelligence significance which affect the national security." In addition, Major Tacker went to great lengths, in this four page letter, outlining to [] all of the information currently available on the subject of UFO's interpreting the Formal Report of the Scientific Advisory Panel, commenting on erroneous or

*Letter from Major Lawrence J. Tacker, U.S. Air Force Executive Officer, Public Information Division, Office of Information Services

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misleading statements on this report in Captain Ruppelt's book, "The Report of Unidentified Flying Objects", and explaining why a portion of the report was classified. A copy of this letter is appended for your information.

In summary, [] belief that this Agency is involved in the "Flying Saucer furore" and is using this as a tool in psychological warfare is entirely unfounded. His indication that CIA is misleading persons in leading them to believe in Flying Saucers is also entirely unfounded. This Agency in conjunction with the Air Force investigated, in 1953, the threat to national security of the then prevalent Flying Saucer rumors. Since that time, CIA has not participated in any Flying Saucer activities and has referred all correspondence to the U. S. Air Force.

Very truly yours,

s/ Lawrence R. Houston

Lawrence R. Houston
General Counsel

Enclosures:

1. Letter, 20 June 1961,
from []
2. Letter, 20 May 1958,
from Major Tacker
3. Lt. 21 May '58

Distribution:

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OSI/ASD/[] :mdv []

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This is to acknowledge your letter of 27 April 1950 addressed to this office with copies to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency concerning the releasable summary and the complete Formal Report of the Scientific Advisory Panel on Unidentified Flying Objects convened 14-18 January 1953.

The complete Formal Report of the Panel has not been fully declassified for security reasons. The Formal Report is not available to the general public for distribution or reproduction.

The Formal Report does not contain the following specific recommendations mentioned in Captain Ruppelt's book, 'The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects'.

p. 293 "The panel didn't recommend that the activities of Blue Book be cut back, and they didn't recommend that it be dropped. They recommended that it be expanded.....the expansion they recommended would require a considerable sum of money. The investigative force of Project Blue Book should be quadrupled in size, they wrote,....."

p. 294 "And lastly, they said that the American public should be told every detail of every phase of the UFO investigation--the details of the sightings, the official conclusions, and why the conclusions were made. This would serve a double purpose; it would dispel any of the mystery that security breeds and it would keep the Air Force on the ball--sloppy investigations and analysis would never occur."

However, the minutes of the various meetings which led to the Formal Report of the Panel do include comments and suggestions of individual members of the panel. This is an unofficial classified supplement to the Formal Panel Report setting forth comments and suggestions of the Panel members, which they believed were inappropriate for inclusion in the Formal Report.

These minutes disclose the fact that members of the panel generally concluded that in view of the complete lack of authenticated evidence an educational training program designed to detest the existence of interplanetary space ships was required. Captain Ruppelt as an interviewer testifying before the panel unofficially proposed, for the purpose of analyzing and evaluating reported sightings, teams which would expand the AFMCC effort. Captain Ruppelt was not a member of the Panel.

These minutes also disclose that because of the brevity of some sightings and the inability of witnesses to express themselves clearly (substantives) that conclusive explanations could not be expected for every case reported. Furthermore, it was considered that normally it would be a great waste of effort to try to solve most of the sightings unless such actions would benefit a training and educational program. The Panel also endorsed the long accepted method for new scientific knowledge which is for the fighter to prove his point not the explainer. Captain Report was probably recalling or referring to his conversations with individual members of the panel and to the unofficial supplement when he wrote his book. In any event I can assure you the Formal Report of the Panel does not contain the recommendations as spelled out in our letter of 27 April 1958.

For your information the classified portion of the Formal Report and the unofficial supplement do not deal specifically with UFO's but on other matters of intelligence significance which affect the national security.

In our attempt to put the UFO subject in proper perspective, it appears that the Air Force cannot compete with the science-fiction writers. We believe that we have the investigation of the UFO phenomena in responsible hands and that an adequate, thorough, and honest program is being conducted. Regardless, a small but articulate segment of people are under the mistaken belief that the Air Force has not sought the assistance of outstanding authorities from without the Air Force to assist in our evaluation of UFO sightings, and that we are withholding vital UFO information from the public, thereby preventing proper evaluation. We have, on numerous occasions, publicized our conclusions relative to UFO and explained our evaluation processes. This group, nevertheless, continues to claim that UFO's are objects from outer space and demand Congressional hearings on the subject.

You can readily understand the continued interest of this small segment because the subject is so novel and fascinating that it supports over 45 organizations of one type or another. Most of these organizations publish news letters or magazines and they expect the Air Force to furnish them material for their publications. Needless to say, we do not have the resources allotted to this project to fill the numerous individual requests which these organizations make for copies of our investigative reports and other related matter.

Furthermore, we would be remiss in our duty to the American public if we, by our assistance, encouraged these organizations in their sensational claims and contentions. Consequently, we do not give them individual attention but rather make periodic press releases through established news channels. In so doing, we show partiality to no one person or organization nor do we place ourselves in the position of planting our stamp of approval on, or giving preferential treatment to, any one of them.

This press release approach used by all branches of the Government is considered censorship by some of these organizations and, because we will not favor them with our individual attention, they contend that we are keeping vital information from the public. The Air Force was compelled to generally adopt the press release approach because in the past when we furnished factual information to certain writers of UFO books and articles upon their individual requests our section was interpreted as granting approval and clearance to the books and articles in which the information was used.

If we withhold certain information from the public on UFO's it is not done for the purpose of depriving the public of vital information necessary for proper evaluation nor is it done because there is scientific proof of the existence of space craft from other planets and we do not wish to alarm the American public. It is done in the majority of instances to protect the people involved from the idle curiosity of the sensation seekers. In a few limited instances it is done to keep from compromising our investigative processes and, in a few instances, it is done for legitimate security reasons.

The Air Force has ³/tremendous task in defending this country against weapon systems which we know actually exist and are in the hands of our potential enemies. To divert more men and money away from this most serious mission into a greatly enlarged program for the investigation of UFO's -- objects about which we have been unable to discover one iota of tangible scientific evidence -- would seriously jeopardize the security of this country against a known proven threat; would be allowing the sensation seekers to dictate our defense policies, and would, in our opinion, lay ourselves open to the charge of gross imprudence.

The Air Force does not deny that unknown objects have been seen by responsible people. It is in the interpretation of these sightings that we are questioned. From our investigation covering the past ten or twelve year period, the Air Force contends that when the evidence of these sightings has been drafted through the scientific criteria it has led to the conclusion that the objects were not space craft and they did not constitute a threat to the security of this country. As an act of faith, the UFO's can be considered manned or unmanned craft from outer space, but as a scientific fact there has been no authenticated scientific evidence presented to or discovered by the Air Force to support this conclusion.

This is all the information available on the subject at the present time.

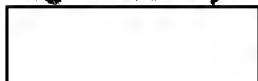
If you have a future need for Air Force statistics on this subject, the latest Air Force press release will always be available upon request.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Major, USAF
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services



CC: Major Byrnes, AFCEH, Rm 4A 940
Major Poland, SAFLI, Rm 5D 918



CIA
CIA, General Counsel (Legislative)

COPY

21 May 1958

STAT
Reference our letter to you, dated 20 May 1958, please make the following word changes:

Paragraph 5, line 5: The word interviewer should be changed to read interviewed (witness).

Paragraph 14, line 5: The word drafted should be changed to read sifted.

Thank you. I am sorry I missed these when I signed the letter.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE J. TACKER
Major, USAF
Executive Officer
Public Information Division
Office of Information Services

STAT
cc: Major Ryrne, AFCIN, Rm 4A 940
Major Poland, SAFLL, Rm 5D 918

STAT CIA
General Counsel (Legislative)

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